Suicides by farmers

1866. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of suicides by farmers in different States on economic grounds during 2003-04 and 2004-05 upto 31st December, 2004;

(b) the consequences of farmers agitation in Rajasthan during the period from August to December, 2004; and

(c) the steps taken by Government and also by the State Governments in curbing the background of suicides by farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Sugarcane farmer's problems in UP

1867. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to solve the problems of the Sugarcane Farmers of Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details of the assistance given to the sugarcane farmers of the State during 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) The Central Government has been implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Sustainable Development of Sugarcane Based Cropping Systems Areas (SUBACS) in sugarcane growing States including Uttar Pradesh for increasing the production and productivity of sugarcane. The scheme has been subsumed under Macro Management Mode of Agriculture along with other 26 schemes with effect from October, 2000 to provide flexibility to States based on local needs. Under the scheme assistance is provided for the transfer of improved technology to the farmers through field demonstrations, training of farmers, supply of farm implements, enhancing seed production, pest control measures. etc. Besides, frontline demonstrations are also organized through Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) on farmers fields to

popularize improved sugarcane cultivation technology amongst the farmers. During 2004-05 Rs. 6680.00 lakhs have been released to Uttar Pradesh under various schemes of Macro Management including SUBACS.

National Fertilizer Policy

1868. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated/finalized the new National Fertilizer Policy;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) if not, the time-frame by which the policy would come into effect?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) Payment of subsidy to indigenous manufacturers of urea is regulated under the provisions of the New Pricing Scheme (NPS) for urea units. Concession to manufacturers and importers of decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers is made under the provisions of the Scheme of Concession on sale of decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers. NPS was introduced w.e.f. 1.4.2003 replacing the erstwhile Retention Price Scheme. NPS is being implemented in stages. Stage-I was of one year duration, from 1.4.2003 to 31.3.2004. Stage-II is of two years duration, from 1.4.2004 to 31.3.2006.

A Working Group has been constituted on 10.12.2004 under the chairmanship of Dr. Y.K. Alagh to review the effectiveness of Stage-I and II of New Pricing Scheme (NPS) for urea units and to formulate a policy for urea units for Stage-III commencing from 1.4.2006. The Working Group would also examine issues pertaining to formulation of feedstock policy especially with regard to nature, pricing and availability, demand and supply of urea upto the end of 11th Five Year Plan, fixing milestones for conversion of existing naphtha and FO/LSHS based units to NG/LNG, mode of determination and methodology of payment of concession to urea units, de-control of movement and distribution of urea, balanced fertilization through urea pricing etc. The Working Group has been asked to submit its report within six months from the date of its constitution.

A policy has been announced for setting up new urea projects and expansion of existing urea projects for augmenting the domestic production